

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended) A rental estimation method through which rental information with regard to rental devices is provided to a customer through a data exchange between a terminal of the customer and a management server of a rental company, comprising the acts of:

~~a data input step for~~ entering work content data indicating a work content through the customer terminal; and

~~a necessary device reporting step for~~ reading out a list of a plurality of necessary devices matching the work content and rental information corresponding to the necessary devices from a predefined database and for providing them to the customer.

2. (currently amended) A rental estimation method according to claim 1, further comprising the act of:

~~a device selection step for~~ selecting a device to be rented from the list of the necessary devices provided through the necessary device ~~reporting step~~ report.

3. (currently amended) A rental estimation method according to claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~, further comprising the act of:

~~a device adding step for~~ adding a device other than the necessary devices for rental.

4. (currently amended) A rental estimation method according to claim 2, further comprising the acts of:

~~a device adding step for~~ adding a device other than the necessary devices for rental;

~~a reservation step for~~ making a rental reservation for renting the device selected ~~in~~ through the device selection ~~step~~ and the device added ~~in~~ through the device ~~adding step~~ addition; and

~~an accepting step for~~ accepting the reservation thus made ~~in the~~ reservation ~~step~~.

5. (currently amended) A rental estimation system comprising:

a data input ~~means~~ device through which data are entered by a rental customer;

a work content management database in which a list of necessary devices each corresponding to a work content is stored;

a stock management database in which rental information with regard to the necessary devices is stored;

a rental management server that reads out a plurality of necessary devices matching a work content and rental information with regard to the necessary devices from the work content management database and the stock management database in response to input of data of a work content through the data input ~~means~~ device; and

a reporting ~~means for providing~~ device that provides the information read out by the rental management server to a customer.

6. (currently amended) A rental estimation system according to claim 5, wherein:

the data input ~~means~~ device further allows an entry of data indicating a rental period; and

the rental estimation system further comprises a rental period adjustment ~~means for adjusting~~ device that adjusts a rental period entered and set through the data input ~~means~~ device individually in correspondence to each of the necessary devices.

7. (currently amended) A rental estimation system according to claim 5 ~~or claim 6~~, further comprising:

a device management database in which specification information relating to specifications of the necessary devices is stored, wherein:

as a predefined detailed information display command is entered through the data input ~~means~~ device, the rental management server reads out

specification information corresponding to the necessary device from the device management database and provides the specification information to a customer.

8. (currently amended) A rental estimation system according to claim 7, wherein:

necessary devices used in a given application are grouped together and groups of necessary devices are stored in the device management database; and

the rental estimation system further comprises a device switching ~~means~~ for device that selectively switching switches the necessary device to a device in a matching group when a predefined input is made through the data input ~~means~~ device.

9. (currently amended) A rental estimation system according to claim 8, further comprising:

an adding ~~means for setting~~ device that sets an additional necessary device selected from the device management database in response to a predefined device add command inputted through the data input ~~means~~ device.

10. (currently amended) A rental information acquisition terminal comprising:

an input ~~means for entering~~ device that enters a work content as prompted in a screen brought up on display;

a recognition ~~means for recognizing~~ device that recognizes the work content entered via the screen brought up on display;

a transmission ~~means for transmitting~~ device that transmits the recognized work content to a server;

a reception ~~means for receiving~~ device that receives information indicating a plurality of types of devices matching the work content and rental information related to the devices, which are searched at the server based upon the work content; and

a display ~~means for displaying~~ device that displays a screen in which the work content are entered and ~~for bringing~~ that brings up a display of the information indicating the plurality of types of devices and their rental information having been received.

11. (original) A rental information acquisition program product for exchanging information related to a rental product between a customer terminal and a server connected through a communication circuit, the program product comprising computer-executable steps of:

generating and displaying a screen in which a work content is entered;  
recognizing the work content entered in the screen brought up on display;  
transmitting the recognized work content to the server;  
receiving information indicating a plurality of types of devices matching the work content and rental information related to the devices, which are searched based upon the transmitted work content; and

generating and displaying a screen displaying the information indicating the devices and the rental information having been received.

12. (currently amended) A rental information acquisition server comprising:

a database in which information indicating at least a plurality of types of devices and rental information corresponding to the devices are stored in memory in correspondence to a work content;

a recognition ~~means for recognizing~~ device that recognizes a work content transmitted from a terminal;

a search ~~means for search~~ device that searches the database based upon the recognized work content to obtain information indicating a plurality of types of devices and rental information related to the devices in correspondence to the recognized work content; and

a transmission ~~means for transmitting~~ device that transmits the information indicating the devices and the rental information thus obtained to the terminal.